OUR DAIRY COMPANY.

What We Did With the Cow; or, Rather, What the Cow Did to Us.

Jerusalem Valley, about twenty miles long and five miles in width at its lower end, lies between two outlying spurs of the Sierra La Sal. Near the upper end of it, where the concave of lofty bluffs walls it round, our little party had made a permanent camp, intending to remain for several weeks, since the locality furnished in abundance those four requisites of a camping-out excursion, namely, grass for the horses, game, wood and good water.

Three miles below us a party of cowboys were in quarters at a "dug-out," and another squad of the same "outfit" had their camp at the lower end of the valley; while between them ranged their cattle, some thousands in number.

We had been living on a purely venison diet so long that it had quite lost its relish, and had become distasteful, in fact; such at least was the condition of the writer's palate. So one morning, after we were fairly settled here, I determined to ride down to the camp of the cattle men, and see whether they could be induced to sell us a bit of fresh beef. Their dug-out was in the side of the bluff, and a few yards away were the corrals and branding-pens. Riding up to the door of the dug-out, I shouted:

"Hullo!"

"Hullo yourself!" came promptly from the interior; and immediately the doorway was filled by a stooping figure, which, as it straightened itself to its full height, proved to be one of the finest-looking men I ever saw. He was six feet and four inches in stature, powerfully built, with a frank, manly face and clear blue eye. This was William Little, or "Little Billy," as he was sportively called, "boss of the outfit" and part owner of the cattle.

"Mornin', stranger!" he said cheerily, as he came into the light.

"Good-morning!" I replied. "I rode over to see if you could sell us some beef."

"Sell you some beef? No, sir! you can't buy no beef of this outfit."

The reply took me aback; but though the refusal seemed abrupt and ungracious, yet the tone in which it was delivered was so hearty that I ventured to ask:

"Why not?"

"Well, we ain't in the habit of sellin' beef to strangers. Thar's a two-year-old hangin' up-down thar at the corral. Cut off what you want an' take it along, but don't never offer to pay a cow-man' for beef!"

"But I would much rather pay you for it. There are half-a-dozen of us at the camp up there"——

"Don't care if there's two dozen of you."

"And we'll be here a month or more"——

"Don't care if you stay six months."

"And we'd like to make regular arrangements"——

"Regular fiddlesticks!" Here, you wait a minute," and striding off towards the corral, he returned with a quarter of tender young beef on his shoulder.

"There, tie that onto your horse, an' when it's gone come an' git some more. We allus keep a critter hangin' up; an' if we ain't here just help yourself."

There was no resisting his blunt kindness, so I rode off with the beef, but, to be even with him, came back the next day with a deer I had shot.

"Thankee!" said he, as I tumbled it from the saddle. "Ven'zun's mity good estin', and we don't git much of a chance to hunt. Ef you kin spare a little of that now and then, I'd like to buy some from you."

"Well, we ain't in the habit of sellin' venison to strangers. When that's gone, come and git some more. We allus keep a critter hangin' up, and ef we ain't there, just help yourself. But don't offer to pay a hunter for deer meat."

He laughed as I quoted his own words of the day before, and from that moment we were friends.

"Little," said I, one day, as we were riding together, "I wonder that, with all the cows you fellows have, you don't corral them, and have fresh milk and cream for your coffee."

"Too much trouble. Coffee straight's good enough for me. But you fellows are welcome to it if you want it. Milk the whole vacada if you wanter, I don't keer."

At camp that night I mentioned the matter to the boys, and it struck them favorably. The Judge's mouth had been watering for cream in his coffee ever since he joined us; and he hailed the proposition with delight. So the next morning we built a corral, or pen, of cottonwood logs, and in the afternoon started out to catch some calves; for we surmised that if we had the youngsters penned, the mothers would be sure to stay around, and we could milk them at our leisure. We soon had half-a-dozen little fellows cut out from the drove, and started them up the valley; but I hope that I may be pardoned for the strength of my simile in saying that it was like trying to drive so many streaks of lightning! I never saw such active, mercurial, declusive little beggars as those calves—some of them not yet a month old! They were as spry as squarrels, as light legged as deer, and as slippery as eels.

They would gallop awkwardly on ahead of us for a few yards, till one would get the idea into his little pate that he was too far from his beloved mamma, when he would wheel as if on a pivot, and with a plaintive "ya-a-a-a-p!" scud back like a rabbit. Then away the rest would go, zigzagging and twisting here and there, worse than a jack-snipe on a windy day. If you were ahead of there and tried to cut them off, they would bolt and dodge like a hare before the hounds. But if you were behind, or at the side, and rode at them to turn them, they wouldn't turn a bit, but keep straight on. A steer would sheer off if you come thundering down on his flank and he sees that there is danger of a collision; bnt these little racers would scud right along, head and tail up, and if you didn't hold up, you'd catch a somersault over them.

The judge, not suspecting the existence of such idiotic perversity, fairly rode down the first one he attempted to overhaul, and calf, horse and rider tumbled together in the dirt. The calf was up and a hundred yards away before the judge regained his seat, and it cost him a scamper of a mile before he could turn it.

At last, however, after infinite trouble, we succeeded in penning three of the calves, and left them to be hunted up by their mothers. These latter we found when we got up the next morning, vainly trying to reach their imprisoned offspring through the corral fence.

The next thing was to catch and milk the anxious cows. The trees in the locality were so close together that we could not use a lasso, and the cows, as if suspecting a trap, would not be driven into that part of the corral which we had left for them. Finally, my brother John took a lariat, and climbing a tree, lay out on a limb about twenty feet from the ground. The rest of us on horseback, then tried to drive the cows under the limb. Two soon took fright and broke away through the woods, but a third, a beautiful black heifer, would not leave her calf.

She was a very handsome animal, as slender as a deer, and her horns, a yard from tip to tip, curved up and out like Turkish scimitars, tapering to points as fine as a bayonet's.

She dodged us here and there like a will-o'-the-wisp, now and then making a quick dash at one of us, and necessitating some abrupt movements on our part, till, in one of her rushes, she passed under the limb where John lay, and the lasso dropped deftly from above, brought her up plunging and wild-eyed.

Getting a rope around one of her hind feet, we "stretched" her between two trees, so that she was comparatively helpless; and then John with a camp-kettle, proceeded to do the milking.

"Soh, boss! soh!" he remarked to her soothingly, but "boss" wouldn't "soh;" a mighty plunge, a writhe of the body, a dexterous fore-handed kick from the free hind leg, and down she came with a thump upon her side; while the camp-kettle flew from John's hands and he dashed wildly around on one leg, nursing the barked ankle of the other. But in a minute she was on her feet, and the same performance, minus the barked ankle, was gone through with again. Finally, both legs of the cow were tied fast. It was found, however, that even then she possessed the power to "hold up" her milk. We could get very little from her. About a pint was at last procured.

Then another lariat was passed around her horns, and with John at one lariat, myself at the other, and the judge acting as a drag behind, we started to the corral, that the calf might have its breakfast. We intended to imprison her there for another trial.

For about ten yards all went well, then there came a sudden, violent bolt; the judge was "jerked" from his feet and landed, face downward, among the sage brush, losing his grasp on the rope; the lariat in John's hands snapped: and I had "a vision of sudden death" in the shape of a black bovine virago with blood-shot eyes and needle-pointed horns, bearing straight down upon me.

All the cow's untamed blood was up. How I got over that corral fence, ten feet high, I don't know to this day. When I could survey the scene from between the bars of my portcullis, the heifer had changed her course, and was precipitating herself upon the judge, who was energetically hoisting his two hundred pounds of flesh up a cotton-wood tree. Disappointed there, she turned to John, who, cut off from the corral, and having no friendly tree in which to take shelter, found that he had urgent business in the direction of the creek, which flowed between steep banks, some twenty yards away. The infuriated animal was between him and the one path which led down to the water's edge, and, with that thing of fire and fury close behind him, he had no time to pick and choose. With one flying leap he disappeared from view, and a dull splash told that he had found refuge in the turbid water below.

Checking herself on a brink, the wrathful cow turned, and, catching sight of me as I peered through the poles of the fence, charged with a vim that shook the whole corral. Then the Judge, who had taken advantage of this diversion, and had slipped down from his perch was discovered by the cow and forced to scurry upward to a place of safety, like a squirrel surprised by a dog.

John's head now appeared above the banks of the gulch, but the enraged heifer dashed at him with a vehemence that caused him to disappear with suddenness of a prairie dog diving into his hole.

Here was a pleasant state of affairs! We had the milk—but the milkee had us. To a disinterested spectator it would have been very laughable, no doubt; the Judge's portly form perched twenty feet from the ground, on a two-inch limb, his chubby arms and legs twined around the body of the tree, and his mild blue eyes glaring from behind his spectacles like the lamps on a doctor's gig; John's head, hatless and disheveled, his face and hair plastered with mud, popping up and down behind the bank of the arroyo, like an animated "Jack-in-the-box;" myself peering through the poles of the corral fence, like a trapped wood-chuck through the bars of his cage; while in the center of the triangle of which we were the apices, with eyes of fire, distended nostrils, and burnished horns raking the ground, lunged and darted the vindictive beast who held us in limbo

The lariats, which were still attached to her, flew out like Berenice's hair, as she flashed hither and thither; and her angry snorts of rage gave full token that her bovine gorge was up. She was bent on doing mischief, and she attended to it strictly, without allowing her attention to be distracted by trivial matters. She had "treed," "corraled," and "holed" her tormentors; and she seemed fully resolved to satisfy her debt of vengence. The slightest move on the part of any one of us brought her in that direction wsth the velocity of a hungry hawk.

Repeated failures, however, at last made her sullen, and she stopped for a moment, so close to the corral that the end of the rope around her foot lay temptingly near the fence. Dropping on my knees, I reached an arm through to secure it. Up to this time the calves had been huddling together in a corral; but now—whether my position was taken as a challenge, or whether courage had suddenly returned to them, I know not—there was a patter of feet in my rear, a brave little bleat, like the crow of a bantam rooster, and "spang!" something struck me behind, as I groveled on all-fours, and my head was driven against the fence with a smart thud.

Jumping to my feet, I faced this new antagonist. There he stood as game as a tom-tit his ridiculously thin legs stiffly outspread, his thread paper tail perked up with a comical twist at the tip, his little bullet-head defiantly cocked to one side, and his twinkling eyes fixed upon me with a look compounded of wonder at his own audacity, fear of the possible consequences, and a fuuny determination to "do or die," in the defense of his persecuted mother. Compared to her, he might have been aptly termed a duodecimo edition, bound in full calf.

I had but time to fully take in the grotesqueness of his appearance, when, with another bleat of defiance, the doughty little hop-o'-my-thumb charged me. Catching him by the ear and tail, I ran him ingloriously back to his corner, bumped his head against the fence, just hard enough to give him a hint not to interfere in the sport of his betters, and turned again to watch the movements of our besieger.

It finally dawned upon the brain of our cockney cook, Batters, that something was wrong; and he had come around in front of the tent, about forty yards away, to see what was the matter. Our wild-eyed foe caught sight of him and incontineutly charged.

Appalled at the sight of the infuriated animal, Batters tumbled backward into the tent, trusting thus to elude the assault. It was a vain hope. The flap was up, and the cow dashed straight at the opening, struck the supporting pole, and down in one billowy heap came the white canvass, covering pursuer and pursued. We ran to the rescue. From under the wildly heaving envelope came a dire discord of mingled sounds—Batters' voice calling lustily for "Elp! elp!" the bellow of the frightened cow, the breaking of things breakable, and the "r-r-r-ip!" of tearing cloth.

At last the exhausted animal became quiet; and Batters crawled from the fallen tent, pale and scared, but unhurt, save a few slight scratches.

It took us fully an hour to free our late antagonist, and when this was done, she limped off down the valley, her spirit cowed, for the time being at least, and her calf apparently wholly forgotten.

The camp was in as demoralized a condition as if a cyclone had struck it. The tent was torn, the cords and stakes broken, and the ground littered with a chaos of splintered tent-pins, tangled cords, bent and broken cooking utensils and table ware, burst flour sacks, torn blankets, dirtied food and miscellaneous heap of debris.

That evening after the wreck was put as nearly ship-shape as possible, the judge passed around a paper, which I copy:

JERUSALEM VALLEY DAIRY COMPANY.

FIRST TRIAL BALANCE.

To 1 day's work, 5 men building corral and catching calves	$ 20 00
" catching one cow	1 00
" milking said cow	25
" 1 pair pantaloons torn climbing tree	1 50
" 1 hat lost in creek	2 00
" 1 broken lariat	1 65
" damage to tent bedding, food, etc.	25 00
" strain on temper, 3 men at $5 each	15 00
" resisting temptation to use bad language, say	1,000 00
Total	$ 1,066 50
Contra by 1 pint of milk	03½
Dr. to profit and loss	$1,066 46½

"Gentlemen, said the judge, after the balance-sheet had been examined. "I move you that in consideration of the statement just submitted, the Jerusalem Valley Dairy association do hereby suspend operations, and that the assets—one pint of milk—be divided amongst the stockholders."

Carried unanimously.—N. P. Ufford in Youths Companion.

Cloudy Chemistry.

Those who write on agricultural chemistry for the farm papers, or talk in public, should at least be familiar enough with the science to write and talk correctly—and the reporters, if themselves ignorant of the subject, should get the speakers whom they report to prepare their own abstracts of what they say, for perhaps it is sometimes the reporter who is to blame for the remarkable chemistical feasts with which we are occasionally regaled. To illustrate: A speaker at a recent meeting of the Massachusetts Horticultural society is made to say that "nitrogen is not a plant food, but a solvent," all of which is sheer nonsense except the final statement that nitrogen is not plant food.

At another meeting of the same well-known society, the same speaker is reported to have said that "in the cellular structure of plants every cell is enveloped in a tissue composed of nitrogen"—which is about as close a tissue of error, botanical and chemical, as could well be crowded into so small a space. Again, he speaks of the excellent effect of coal ashes in extracting nitrogen from filthy waters, the nitrogen turning first into ammonia, then into nitric acid and then into soluble nitrates which wash away. Verily, the days of the old alchemists must be coming again, if one substance can be "turned into" another in this style, and all this appears in one of Boston's best known papers.

Real Mean.

Chicago Herald.

Two young ladies were overheard talking glibly and confidentially on a suburban train.

"Now, Mary," said one, "tell me why Charley and you quarreled."

"Because he's a ninny, that's the reason. You know he's been coming to see me for two years, and I could see just as plain as anybody else that he was head over heels in love with me. But he didn't seem to have any snap to him, and I got real impatient, just as any girl would have done. A few nights before Christmas he called to see me and before he went away I says: 'Charley, I want to make you a Christmas present, but I want to be sure it will suit you. It is something real nice, warm, useful and ornamental, and will always stay with you.' 'A scarf?' he says. 'No, not a scarf,' I said, 'though it might embrace you. It weighs about a hundred pounds, and I've heard you say you thought it very precious.' 'Oh, I know,' he says, 'a bicycle!' By this time I was nearly mad, but I made one more effort. 'Not a bicycle,' I says, 'but it can walk, has a mouth, eyes, pretty hair and is very affectionate.' 'Now I know,' he said, and what do you think the ninny guessed that time? A big Newfoundland dog. I was never so disgusted in my life, and have not seen Charley since He's treated me real mean, and now leap year is gone, and I just hate him. Oh, there he is now at the other end of the car. Ain't he sweet? I wish he would come and talk to us."

Bits of Science.

Mr. Swan has estimated the life of an electrie glow lamp at about 5800 hours. This is a very high average, and the conditions under which it was attained, in the case of the Swan lamp at least, must have been exceptionally favorable.

Suberine, the characteristic component of cork, is a true fat, saponifiable by alkalies and oxidizable by nitric acid, which converts it into a mixture of suberic acid and ceric acid. It is composed of the mixed glycerides of phellonic and stearic acids.

Vulcanized fibre has been employed for valves for marine condensers. It is said to do much better than India rubber. Valves of this fibre do not skew or corrugate, withstand well the action of water and oil, and give very little trouble after they have been carefully fitted in place.

Aseptol, a new antiseptic, says M. E. Transer, has for its scientific name, orthoxyphenyl—sulphurous acid. It is an acid phenol, capable of neutralizing ammoniacal bases. It is said to be preferable to phenol, as an antiseptic, because it possesses the decided advantage of not being poisonous.

The eider duck does not, Dr. Sundstrom, of Stockholm, has ascertained, take her young during the summer into the ocean, as is so generally supposed, but remains with them among the islands on the coast. It appears that the eider duck has greatly increased in the south of Sweden during the last few years.

Snails in a state of captivity can, Dr. Rawitz, of Berlin, has discovered, be fed on paper. Dr. Kossel confirms this fact by a statement based on his own observations. He says that after feeding snails with highly calcareous paper for sometime he found abnormal calcareous deposits in their monstrously developed shells.

It is maintained by Herr S. Ralisher that no tests have established the development of electricty during the conversion of water into steam, and that even upon electrified surface the steam which arises is electrically neutral. He also states that it can be experimentally demonstrated that no electricty results from the condensatiou of the vapor of the atmosphere.

A first study on the parallax of the sun by Mr. Bouquet de la Gyre has been submitted to the Academy of Sciences, Paris. This paper is founded upon the calculations made in Mexico by the author and M. F. Arago during the late transit of Venus. From the measurements then taken there results a mean parallax of 6,79, with an apparent approximation of one-hundreth of a second.

Prof. Hellriegel has made special researches on the influence of heat and light upon the development of plants. At a constant temperature of 40° C. in the soil the roots of barley cannot develop themselves. A constant temperature of 30° is not destructive, but decidedly injurious. A constant temperature of 20° is the best adapted to the wants of the plants, but one of 10° is not distinctly injurious.

For the rapid preparation of standard solutions of carbon disulphide, M. A. Livache takes a solution of soap, with which he incorporates a certain quantity of petroleum. In this solution he can dissolve on stirring more than 200 grams of disulphide of carbon per litre for 150 grams of soap. The solution so prepared, after water is added, remains perfectly limpid, the disulphide of carbon not separating out.

It must be of importance to dyers to learn that M. A. Koechlin has published a new method of fixing chromium oxide, founded on the property of alkaline solution of chrome of giving of their oxide to organic fibres on being left in contact for some hours. Thus, if cotton is steeped in a mixture of two parts acetate of chrome at 16°, (Beanme') two parts of caustic soda at 38°, and one part of water, and after twelve hours' immersion the cotton is washed, the mordanting is complete.

Sir Frederick Abel, chairman of the Council of the Society of Arts, London, believes the result of recent tests seem to foreshadow a future for the employment of electricity as the motive power not merely of small pleasure boats, but of small vessels in which silent progression is a desideratum sufficiently important to counterbalance the defect due to the limited period during which the motive power can be maintained. The future of the transmission of heavy weights on land by means of electricity is not less full of promise. Prof. Jenkin is soon to make a practical application at Millwall, London, of a system for moving goods trucks by telfer lines suspended on poles as telegraph wires are now.